

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information service apparatus which comprises display means for displaying text information, and can be connected to an audio output device that can output  
5 speech information corresponding to the text information, comprising:

determination means for determining if the audio output device is connected; and

switching control means for making output  
10 destination switching control that outputs the speech information corresponding to the text information to the audio output device when said determination means determines that the audio output device is connected, and outputs the text information to the display means  
15 when said determination means determines that the audio output device is not connected.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

20 exchange means for exchanging information with an external apparatus via a network, and

in that the text information is information which is received by the exchange means from the external apparatus via the network, and the information includes  
25 mail information and Web information.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

text-to-speech synthesis means for executing a text-to-speech synthesis process on the basis of the text information to generate synthetic speech as the speech information.

4. The apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:

notification means for, when the synthetic speech generated by said text-to-speech synthesis means is to be output to the audio output device or when the text information is to be output to the display means, notifying the user of an output in a corresponding case.

5. The apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:

superposing means for superposing the synthetic speech generated by said text-to-speech synthesis means and a sound different from the synthetic speech, and in that when the audio output device has already output a sound, said superposing means superposes the synthetic speech with the sound, and the audio output device outputs the sound superposed with the synthetic speech.

6. The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein when said switching control means makes control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by said text-to-speech synthesis means to the audio output device, said  
5 switching control means further makes control that outputs the text information to the display means.

7. An information service apparatus which comprises display means for displaying text information,  
10 text-to-speech synthesis means for executing a text-to-speech synthesis process on the basis of the text information to generate synthetic speech, and audio output means that can output the synthetic speech, comprising:

15 reception means for receiving information indicating a type of space;

determination means for determining a type of space indicated by the information with reference to the information received by said reception means; and

20 switching control means for making output destination switching control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by the text-to-speech synthesis means to the audio output means, or outputs the text information to the display means, in  
25 accordance with a determination result of said determination means.

8. The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said determination means determines whether the type of space indicated by the information is a private or public space, and

5       said switching control means makes the output destination switching control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by the text-to-speech synthesis means to the audio output means when the type of space is a private space, and outputs the text  
10 information to the display means when the type of space is a public space.

9. An information service apparatus which comprises display means for displaying text information,  
15 text-to-speech synthesis means for executing a text-to-speech synthesis process on the basis of the text information to generate synthetic, and audio output means that can output the synthetic speech, comprising:

20       reception means for receiving information used to specify an external apparatus;

          holding means for holding a list of information used to specify the external apparatus present in a predetermined space, and

25       switching control means for making output destination switching control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by the text-to-speech

synthesis means to the audio output means, or outputs the text information to the display means, depending on whether or not the information received by said reception means is included in the list.

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10. An information service method to be executed by an information service apparatus which comprises display means for displaying text information, and can be connected to an audio output device that can output  
10 speech information corresponding to the text information, comprising:

a determination step of determining if the audio output device is connected; and

a switching control step of making output  
15 destination switching control that outputs the speech information corresponding to the text information to the audio output device when it is determined in the determination step that the audio output device is connected, and outputs the text information to the  
20 display means when it is determined in the determination step that the audio output device is not connected.

11. An information service method to be executed by  
25 an information service apparatus which comprises display means for displaying text information, text-to-speech synthesis means for executing a

text-to-speech synthesis process on the basis of the text information to generate synthetic speech, and audio output means that can output the synthetic speech, comprising:

5           a reception step of receiving information indicating a type of space;

          a determination step of determining a type of space indicated by the information with reference to the information received in the reception step; and

10           a switching control step of making output destination switching control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by the text-to-speech synthesis means to the audio output means, or outputs the text information to the display means, in  
15 accordance with a determination result in the determination step.

12.   An information service method to be executed by an information service apparatus which comprises  
20 display means for displaying text information, text-to-speech synthesis means for executing a text-to-speech synthesis process on the basis of the text information to generate synthetic speech, and audio output means that can output the synthetic speech,  
25 comprising:

          a reception step of receiving information used to specify an external apparatus;

a holding step of holding a list of information used to specify the external apparatus present in a predetermined space, and

5 a switching control step of making output destination switching control that outputs the synthetic speech generated by the text-to-speech synthesis means to the audio output means, or outputs the text information to the display means, depending on whether or not the information received in the  
10 reception step is included in the list.

13. A program making a computer function as an information service apparatus of claim 1.

15 14. A program making a computer execute an information service method of claim 10.

15. A computer readable storage medium storing a program of claim 13.

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